justification subject to availability of resources. Break up of targets for opening of Post Offices and achievements made during the last three years is given below:—

Year	Target		Achievement	
	Extra Departmental Branch Post Offices (EDBOs)	Departmental Sub Post Offices (DSOs)	Extra Departmental Branch Post Offices (EDBOs)	Departmental Sub Post (DSOs)
1997-98	500	50	402	52
1998-99	598	50	598	50
1999-2000	500	50	360*	47*

•As on 28.3.2001

(c) and (d) The three norms on which a proposal for opening of post office is examined relate to distance, population and income. Extra Departmental Branch Post Office is opened, if income of the proposed post office meets 33.3% of its cost for normal rural areas and 15% in hilly, tribal, desert and inaccessible areas.

Installation of public telephones in Assam

4167. SHRIMATI BASANTI SARMA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of applications lying pending for installation of public telephone booths in Assam till date togetherwith the details thereof; and

(b) by when these applications are likely to be cleared?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAP AN SIKDAR): (a) Sir, 698 applications are pending for allotment of public telephones booths in

Assam as on 31.3.2001. The Telecom District-wise details of pending applications are given below:—

Name of the Telecom Distt.	Application pending for allotment of public telephone booths
Kamrup	310
Dibrugarh	8
Silchar	0
Jorhat	47
Bongaigaon	328
Tezpur	5 0
Nagaon	
TOTAL	698

(b) The pending applications are to be cleared progressively by August, 2001.

TRAI out of scrutiny of CAG

4168. SHRI S. RAMACHANDRAN PILLAI:

SHRI BRATIN SENGUPTA:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Telecome Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has been taken out of scrutiny of the CAG; and

(b) if so, the reasons for such a decision by Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) No, Sir Under Section 23(2) of the TRAI Act, the accounts of TRAI shall be audited by the CAG at such intervals as may be specified by him. This provision empowering the CAG to audit the accounts of TRAI has not been affected by the amendment to Section 23(2) of the Act, which has only inserted an explanation for the removal of doubts, stipulating that decisions of the authority taken in discharge of its functions under clause (b)